

So the superintendent didn't hide her tears Tuesday when she officially declared her retirement to her staff at the district's annual employee convocation. It surprised many but not everyone gathered at Memorial Hall. Shackelford has always maintained that she would step down after five years. It was something she made clear from day one.

"There are times in your life where you know it's somebody else's turn," she said.

In 2005, Shackelford replaced Ray Daniels, who was highly regarded for his leadership.

"In one sense, you'd say all she had to do was follow up on the path that Ray Daniels had set. There's some truth to that," said Bill Reardon, the district's lobbyist and a former state lawmaker. But he pointed out that "the more you achieve, the remaining improvements become really difficult."

However, she had a proven track record with curriculum reform for at-risk children.

Shackelford came to the district 13 years ago to work directly with curriculum. She was among the early leaders who helped implement First Things First. Thirteen years ago, the district was 11 percent proficient in reading and 3 percent proficient in math. Students are now 61 percent proficient in reading and 63 percent proficient in math, district officials said.

"There's no other district in the state that's gone from single digits to 60 (percent)," she said, praising the district's more than 19,500 students.

Shackelford credits the success to students, teachers, custodians, bus drivers and others.

STUDENT AID AND FISCAL RESPONSIBILITY ACT OF 2009

SPEECH OF

HON. ALLEN BOYD

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 16, 2009

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 3221) to amend the Higher Education Act of 1965, and for other purposes:

Mr. BOYD. Madam Chair, I rise to express my concern with H.R. 3221, the Student Aid and Fiscal Responsibility Act of 2009. This legislation was crafted in the Committee on Education and Labor after President Obama's Fiscal Year 2010 Budget proposed reforming the federal student loan system. Although I support the President's goal of ensuring our affordable and accessible educational opportunities for our nation's children, I have some serious reservations with this bill.

H.R. 3221 calls for the transition of all federal student lending to the Direct Loan Program by July 1st 2010. Not only will this move end the reliable administration and servicing of student loans at more than 4,000 schools across the country, this transition will risk job losses at a time when unemployment is threatening to hit 10 percent nationwide. This industry represents over 30,000 jobs throughout our country, and 700 Sallie Mae employees in my district alone.

These employees have a history with the program, the college administrators and the students that they serve, given the over 40 years of the program's existence. During that time the private industry has continued to evolve to better help students with their financial responsibilities through quality customer

service and product innovation. It is evident that as the Direct Loan and Federal Family Education Loan (FFEL) programs have competed over the years the quality of the student experience has been changed for the better. I am not comfortable taking this dynamic out of the equation via the provisions in H.R. 3221. Furthermore, I am concerned that the quick transition required by this bill could prove burdensome to many of the schools that are currently using the FFEL program despite the efforts of the Department of Education to prepare for it.

I believe that the country and students would be better served if the private industry framework of the current system was enhanced instead of proceeding with H.R. 3221 as written and I would therefore urge my colleagues to vote no.

TRIBUTE TO PAUL BALLOU HOFER, JR.

HON. KEN CALVERT

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 17, 2009

Mr. CALVERT. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor and pay tribute to an individual whose dedication and contributions to the community of Ontario, California were exceptional. Today I ask that the House of Representatives honor and remember an incredible man and American patriot, Paul Ballou Hofer, Jr. Paul was a dear friend of mine and I was deeply saddened by his passing on July 8, 2009.

Paul was born to Paul Ballou Hofer and Frances Morgan Hofer on January 23, 1921 at the family ranch in Ontario, California. He attended Mountain View Elementary School, Chaffey High School and the University of Southern California. A natural athlete, at Chaffey he played varsity basketball for four years and was a halfback on the football team, receiving dual scholarships to USC for both sports.

During World War II Paul served in the U.S. Navy, commissioned as a Naval Aviator, with several thousand hours of flight time. In 1944 Paul married his high school sweetheart, Laura Jean Belcher, who preceded him in death. They had three sons, Paul III, John and Brett who grew up in the same house in which their father was born. Along with his brothers Morgan, also deceased, and Phillip, Paul was a fourth generation vineyard farmer at Hofer Ranch which was founded by his family in 1882. Paul always believed that the lessons learned from lifetimes of farming, hard work and determination, coupled with the deeply held and abiding belief that land is what endures, have been the anchor that has guided the family through seven generations on the ranch.

In addition to ranching, Paul was a man of many interests. He had a great love of the outdoors, with a passion for fly fishing and wing shooting. Paul was a member of the Masons, and also of the Republican Party. He collected antique farm and winery equipment, proudly adding to the collection at Hofer Ranch. In addition to his three sons, Paul is survived by his brother, Phillip, and his family; his grandchildren, Jason Hofer (Christina), Jacklyn Hofer Winton (Jeremy), Morgan Hofer

and Laura Hofer; his great-granddaughter, Elizabeth; and other family members.

Paul's passion for his ranch, his family, and his community has contributed immensely to the betterment of Ontario, California. I was proud to call Paul a fellow community member, American and good friend. I hope his family knows that their father, brother, and grandfather, and the goodness he brought to this world, will always be remembered.

TRIBUTE TO MARY L. NIRMAIER

HON. BLAINE LUETKEMEYER

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 17, 2009

Mr. LUETKEMEYER. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor Mary L. Nirmaier and Rose Ross, two members of the only 300 remaining survivors of the Women's Airforce Service Pilots. I am proud to see these two remarkable women honored with the Congressional Gold Medal.

Women Airforce Service Pilots were the first women in history to fly America's military aircraft. Between the years 1942–1944, women were recruited to fly non-combat missions, so that male pilots could be deployed in combat. Through their actions, Women Airforce Service Pilots were a catalyst for revolutionary reform in the integration of women pilots into the U.S. Armed Services.

The Congressional Gold Medal is the highest and most distinguished award that the U.S. Congress can award to a civilian. Just as the Navajo Code Talkers and Tuskegee Airmen served with distinction and were awarded the Congressional Gold Medal, it is also appropriate for Congress to recognize and honor the service of the WASP with the Congressional Gold Medal.

Our soldiers, sailors, and pilots sacrifice everything they have in service to America and will serve as a permanent reminder of the bravery, loyal patriotism, and love of country.

In closing, Madam Speaker, I ask all my colleagues to join me in wishing Ms. Nirmaier and Ms. Ross our sincerest thanks and appreciation for their commitment, dedication, and service to our nation. It is an honor to represent them in the United States Congress.

TRIBUTE TO GARY, LISA, JACKSON AND JESSICA WALTERS FOR THEIR SUPPORT FOR KINSHIP PARTNERS

HON. MICHELE BACHMANN

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 17, 2009

Mrs. BACHMANN. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor one of the most passionate families I have ever met, Gary and Lisa Walters and their children, Jackson (age 15) and Jessica (age 14). They are passionate about making a difference in their community. To raise awareness and funds for Kinship Partners, a mentoring program that relies only on donations, the Walters Family traveled from Brainerd, Minnesota to our capital, Washington, DC. But unlike most Americans who travel to Washington, D.C. for a cause, they